

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An automatic tube-type specimen container supply apparatus comprising:

5 a container storing box a bottom of which has a tapered surface having a container collecting position in a lowest part thereof to collect a plurality of tube-type specimen containers in one spot through an insertion port;

10 a container individually-sending mechanism configured to lift up the specimen containers, which are collected in the container collecting position, one by one along one side wall located close to the container collecting position;

15 an outlet formed in the one side wall to discharge the specimen containers, which are lifted up by the container individually-sending mechanism, outside the container storing box; and

20 a container carry-out mechanism including a carry-out conveyor to automatically carry out the specimen containers discharged through the outlet,

25 wherein the container individually-sending mechanism includes a drive source and a lifting plate which is driven up and down by the drive source, and the lifting plate has a top end with a tapered surface, the tapered surface having a space to place only one specimen container lying on a side thereof and descending toward an outside of the container storing

box.

2. The automatic tube-type specimen container supply apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising an auxiliary plate mounted on one side of the lifting plate such that the auxiliary plate is 5 slidable up and down relative to the lifting plate, and wherein the auxiliary plate has a top end with a tapered surface that descends toward an outside of the container storing box, the top end of the auxiliary 10 plate being flush with that of the lifting plate when the lifting plate descends and being located in a lower level than that of the lifting plate when the lifting plate ascends.

3. The automatic tube-type specimen container supply apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the 15 container storing box has a two-layer structure including a first partition plate and a second partition plate that are vertically opposed to each other, the first partition plate having a tapered surface that descends from one side to another side, the second partition plate having a tapered surface that descends in a direction opposite to the tapered 20 surface of the first partition plate, and a path is formed between the first and second partition plates to allow one specimen container to pass therethrough.

4. The automatic tube-type specimen container supply apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the 25

container storing box has a two-layer structure including a first partition plate and a second partition plate that are vertically opposed to each other, the first partition plate having a tapered 5 surface that descends from one side to another side, the second partition plate having a tapered surface that descends in a direction opposite to the tapered surface of the first partition plate, and a path is formed between the first and second partition plates to 10 allow one specimen container to pass therethrough.